

# EIR Regional Transportation Plan Environmental Impact Report

Spring 2007



**The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires agencies to prepare and circulate an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) before approving a project that may cause significant environmental effects.**

## California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

After over thirty years of implementation, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) has become the most comprehensive and important environmental law in California. Procedurally, CEQA requires agencies to evaluate a wide range of environmental effects and to disclose all significant effects in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Substantively, it mandates agencies to reduce or avoid significant effects by requiring the adoption of feasible alternatives or mitigation. The CEQA process provides a multidisciplinary, environmental planning tool to help safeguard California's natural environment and help protect the health and well being of all Californians.

## Useful Environmental Planning Tool

The Program EIR for the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) fulfills legal requirements and provides an opportunity to inform decision-makers and the public about potential environmental effects of the RTP Alternatives. This Program EIR broadly evaluates environmental effects, on factors such as air quality, water quality, and cumulative impacts, and includes mitigation to reduce significant environmental effects to the extent feasible. It supports the selection of the preferred plan and supplies the foundation for the subsequent, site-specific

environmental reviews that will be conducted by implementation agencies as projects in the RTP are developed. Specifically, the EIR provides useful regional-scale environmental analysis and mitigation measures to help implementation agencies evaluate and protect our environment.

## Planning Process

SCAG employed an innovative planning process known as PILUT—Planning for Integrated Land Use and Transportation—to develop the 2004 RTP and EIR. The process was guided by *Compass Growth Visioning*, a participatory effort to help move Southern California towards a more sustainable future.

PILUT planning principals ensured that evaluations of alternative transportation/ land use plans were comprehensive, and active participation from stakeholders and the public confirmed that the analyses were relevant, inclusive, and useful.

After a two-year process, the Regional Council certified the Final Program EIR on April 1, 2004.

## Contact Information

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